AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.173(d) , matter to be omitted is [bracketed] and matter to be added is underlined.

1. (Once Amended) A swallowing-assistive drink for assisting an individual in swallowing a medication, the swallowing-assistive drink comprising:

water and an adhesive paste which form a viscous liquid having a viscosity in the range of from 1,000-25,000 cP at 20°C; and

a medicine enwrapped in the viscous liquid;

wherein said swallowing-assistive drink has been packaged in a prepared form in the absence of a medication prior to enwrapping the medicine.

2. (Original) The swallowing-assistive drink of claim 1 wherein the adhesive paste is at least one selected from the group consisting of agar, carrageenan, gellan gum, furcellaran, gelatin, pectin, curdlan, locust bean gum, tara gum, guar gum, xanthan gum, arginic acid, arginic acid salt, azotobacter vinelandi gum, cassia gum, psyllium seed gum, tamarind gum, CMCNa, CMCCa, whey protein starch and modified starch.

3. (Original) The swallowing-assistive drink of claim 1 wherein the swallowing-assistive drink contains in the range of from 0.1-5.0 wt % adhesive paste and in the range of from 80.0-99.9 wt % water.

4. (Original) The swallowing-assistive drink` of claim 1 wherein the medicine is at least one of a tablet, a capsule, a granule, and powder.

5. (Original) The swallowing-assistive drink of claim 1 wherein the medicine is a mixture of solid formulations and at least one of granules and powder.

6. (Twice Amended) A swallowing-assistive drink for helping an individual swallow a medication, the swallowing-assistive drink comprising:

water and an adhesive paste which forms a gelatinoid having a gel strength in the range of from 10-100 g/cm^2 at 20°C; and

a medicine enwrapped in the gelatinoid;

wherein said swallowing-assistive drink is packaged in a prepared form in the absence of a medication prior to enwrapping the medicine.

7. (Original) The swallowing-assistive drink of claim 6 wherein the adhesive paste is at least one selected from the group consisting of agar, carrageenan, gellan gum, furcellaran, gelatin, pectin, curdlan, locust bean gum, tara gum, guar gum, xanthan gum, arginic acid, arginic acid salt, azotobacter vinelandi gum, cassia gum, psyllium seed gum, tamarind gum, CMCNa, CMCCa, whey protein starch and modified starch.

8. (Original) The swallowing-assistive drink of claim 6 wherein the swallowing-assistive drink contains in the range of from 0.1-5.0 wt % adhesive paste and in the range of from 80.0-99.9 wt % water.

9. (Original) The swallowing-assistive drink of claim 6 wherein the medicine is at least one of a tablet, a capsule, a granule, and powder.

10. (Original) The swallowing-assistive drink of claim 6 wherein the medicine is a mixture of solid formulations and at least one of granules and powder.

11. (Once Amended) A method for assisting an individual in taking a medicine by swallowing the medicine, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a swallowing-assistive drink in a prepared form containing water and an adhesive paste which forms a viscous liquid having a viscosity in the range of from 1,000-25,000 cP at 20°C; and

(b) enwrapping the medicine in the viscous liquid.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein step (b) comprises enwrapping at least one of a tablet, a capsule, a granule, and powder in the viscous liquid.

13. (Twice Amended) A method for assisting an individual in taking a medicine by swallowing the medicine, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a swallowing-assistive drink in a prepared form containing water and an adhesive paste which forms a gelatinoid having a gel strength in the range of from 10-100 g/cm^2 at 20°C; and

(b) enwrapping the medicine in the gelatinoid.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13 wherein step (b) comprises enwrapping at least one of a tablet, a capsule, a granule, and powder in the gelatinoid.

15. (Twice Amended) A method for taking a medication, comprising the steps of:

providing a viscous swallowing-assistive material in prepared form, wherein the swallowing-assistive material has a viscosity of 1,000-25,000 cP at 20°C;

combining the swallowing-assistive material with a medicine;

wherein the medicine is enwrapped within the swallowing-assistive material; and

swallowing the combination [in conjunction with] after the combining step.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 15 wherein the medicine is at least one of a tablet, a capsule, a granule, and powder.

17. (Twice Amended) A method for taking a medication, comprising the steps of:

providing a viscous swallowing-assistive material in prepared form, wherein the swallowing-assistive material has a gel strength of 10-100 g/cm^2 at 20°C;

combining the swallowing-assistive material with a medicine;

wherein the medicine is enwrapped within the swallowing-assistive material; and

swallowing the combination [in conjunction with] after the combining step.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 17 wherein the medicine is at least one of a tablet, a capsule, a granule, and powder.

19. (Twice Amended) A method for swallowing a solid material, comprising the steps of:

providing a viscous swallowing-assistive material in prepared form, wherein the swallowing-assistive material has a viscosity of 1,000-25,000 cP at 20°C;

combining the swallowing-assistive material with the solid material;

wherein the solid material is enwrapped within the swallowing-assistive material; and

swallowing the combination [in conjunction with] after the combining step.

20. (Twice Amended) A method for swallowing a solid material, comprising the steps of:

providing a viscous swallowing-assistive material in prepared form, wherein the swallowing-assistive material has a gel strength of 10-100 g/cm^2 at 20°C;

combining the swallowing-assistive material with the solid material;

wherein the solid material is enwrapped within the swallowing-assistive material; and

swallowing the combination [in conjunction with] after the combining step.

21. (Previously Presented) A swallowing-assistive material suitable for combining with a medicine, comprising:

water; and

one or more of the following viscosity building agents: agar, carrageenan, gellan gum, furcellaran, gelatin, pectin, curdlan, locust bean gum, tara gum, guar gum, xanthan gum, arginic acid, arginic acid salt, azotobacter vinelandi gum, cassia gum, psyllium seed gum, tamarind gum, CMCNa, CMCCa, whey protein starch and modified starch;

wherein said swallowing-assistive material is in a prepared form uncombined with a medicine, and comprises a viscous liquid having a viscosity in the range of from 1,000-25,000 cP at 20°C.

22. (Previously Presented) The swallowing-assistive material of claim 19 wherein the swallowing-assistive material comprises 0.1-5.0 wt % viscosity building agent and 80.0-99.9 wt % water.

23. (Previously Presented) A swallowing-assistive material suitable for combining with a medicine, comprising:

water; and

one or more of the following viscosity building agents: agar, carrageenan, gellan gum, furcellaran, gelatin, pectin, curdlan, locust bean gum, tara gum, guar gum, xanthan gum, arginic acid, arginic acid salt, azotobacter vinelandi gum, cassia gum, psyllium seed gum, tamarind gum, CMCNa, CMCCa, whey protein starch and modified starch;

wherein said swallowing-assistive material is in a prepared form uncombined with medicine and comprises a viscous liquid having a gel strength of 10-100 g/cm^2 at 20°C.

24. (Previously Presented) The swallowing-assistive material of claim 21 wherein the swallowing-assistive material comprises 0.1-5.0 wt % viscosity building agent and 80.0-99.9 wt % water.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW

A brief telephone interview was conducted in this case on December 20, 2004 between Examiner Susan Tran and Applicants' representative, Sheila Gibson. The undersigned is deeply appreciative of the courtesy extended by Examiner Tran in participating in this interview.

Exhibits and/or Demonstrations

No exhibits or demonstrations were presented during the interview.

Identification of Claims Discussed

Pending Claims 1, 6, 15, 17, 19, and 20 were discussed during the interview.

Identification of Prior Art Discussed

Speck *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,010,061) was discussed during the interview.

Proposed Amendments

Applicants proposed amending Claims 15, 17, 19, and 20 to recite, in relevant part, "swallowing the combination after the combining step" to overcome the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Principal Arguments and Other Matters

Applicants' representative briefly discussed with the Examiner the differences between Speck *et al.* and the instant application. Specifically, Applicants noted that Speck *et al.* discloses fluid suspensions of guar flour that must be drunk within 5 minutes of preparing the suspension, and therefore, could not be supplied to the end user in an already-prepared form. See Speck, col. 3, lines 3-16 and examples 1-7. Applicants' arguments are more fully set forth below.

Results of Interview

No final agreement was reached. Applicants agreed to resubmit support from the specification for the amendments filed in the previous response and additional arguments regarding the differences between Speck *et al.* and Claims 1-24. In addition, Applicants agreed

to amend Claims 15, 17, 19, and 20 to recite, in relevant part, "swallowing the combination after the combining step."